

February 28, 2011

Stacy Howlett

A Student of Gateway Community College

To whom it may concern,

"The recession isn't enough" is what the headlines should read on the newspapers, as it refers to our current budget proposal.

I myself am a student of Gateway Community College, which has the biggest turn out of freshman than any other community college in the state yearly. And out of the entire student body, more than 60% is made up of students on a Pell Grant. With this current proposal at least 40% of those who would usually get a Pell Grant will be forced to drop out because of the burden of the out of pocket expenses for school that cannot be afforded by them. I am one of that 40%.

As a business accounting major of the college I do understand the fact that the country must decrease spending, but as our great congresswoman Rosa DeLauro argues "where do we start?" Why would we start with education on the chopping block first? It's bad enough that as students we are also being hit with the rest of the economic burdens such as the increases in things like taxes and gas. The vast majority of low-income families today are working but still struggling to make ends meet: struggling to find and keep a toehold in a changing labor market, to keep up with their bills, to pay the spiraling costs of essentials like housing, and to raise children with a chance of future success. These families have much in common with other American families as they seek to balance work and family life, yet people in low-income families are more financially vulnerable than those in higher-income families. I say that to say this, while your average American family makes \$80,000 a year in Connecticut, in my opinion, the average American family in Connecticut makes only \$40,000 a year, and if the family is

broken then under \$20,000 a year; and we are the ones using the Pell Grant for our education.

Let us get past the numbers and just talk facts. Students' economic wellbeing is at stake with this new budget proposal. You cannot expect to create more jobs by getting rid of current jobs, that's just job shifting. Without the Pell Grants to keep us in school furthering our education, there is no way that we can get the economic stability that is expected of us by society. As students in college we have made the choice to be in school, and as a government you should make it possible for us to continue going to school. A budget cut in education is not how you make that possible and I do mean the whole proposal, because it is planned to raise tuition yet again, but cut the financial funding for it, as well as cutting our tutoring, lab, library hours, and our faculty.

The point of the matter is that this deficit was created by unbudgeted spending and that is what should be cut, not education. Education should not be touched; it is the foundation of our economic status as a country, and that status will diminish with the retirement and deaths of our elders as well as the growth in stupidity in us youths because of the cuts in education.

Since education is truly the key to success: duplicate keys must be made to assure that we all get in.

Thank You for Your time

Sincerely,

Stacy Howlett